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TAGS: ECON FIAD PREL SOCI XF XI ZR ZP CN PU MV SO SP
SUBJECT: MISSION SPAIN ON "THE PRESIDENTIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUMMIT

& BEYOND"

REF: STATE 112468

SBU - ENTIRE TEXT

¶11. SUMMARY: In response to taskings set out in reftel, Post's Muslim Engagement Working Group canvassed a wide range of contacts to solicit qualified nominees for the Entrepreneurship Summit. In addition, the Public Affairs Section (PAS) has widely publicized the event. The Working Group has met and coordinated several times since the cable was received and made progress on several fronts, including identification of several candidates for the Summit(to be submitted septel), scheduling and initial planning for roundtables, and identifying areas to hone in on over the next few months. This cable also includes responses to Action Items in the reftel.

END SUMMARY

WORKING GROUP

¶12. On November 13 and November 25, the PAO and ECON Counselor jointly invited Embassy Officers and local staff to a Muslim Engagement Working Group to focus on the objectives of the Summit. The meeting was attended by representatives of PAS, ECON, POL, the U.S. Foreign Commercial Service (USCS), and other Mission elements, including Consulate Barcelona (by conference call). The group will meet as needed to advance the Summit objectives. (Reftel, tasking para 8)

SUMMIT NOMINATIONS:

¶13. The Muslim communities in Spain maintain a relatively low profile. Most of Spain's Muslims are manual laborers from Northern Africa (Morocco) and Sub-Saharan Africa who have come to Spain to seek jobs. Many of the Muslims residing in Catalonia and down the eastern coast to Valencia have family ties in Pakistani and South Asia. Identifying candidates who fit the particular profile of the Summit has been challenging given the diverse populations, especially since the majority reside in areas where the Embassy has limited contact. Mission outreach has therefore concentrated on immigrant and Muslim communities through social and cultural organizations. The Mission has identified a half dozen potential candidates and will forward nominations via septel. (Reftel tasking para 9)

PUBLICIZING THE SUMMIT

¶14. In order to further publicize the Summit among Muslim businesspersons and entrepreneurs outside our normal channels,

the Mission has reached out to business chambers of commerce (including the American Chamber of Commerce and American Business Council). We contacted our Consular Agents in areas known to have important Muslim communities; however, no appropriate nominees could be identified.

¶ 15. To cast a wider net, we have translated and posted information about the Summit from the White House's "Entrepreneurship.gov" site on our Internet site, Facebook and Twitter pages, and sent the information to "WebIslam," the largest Spanish language site dedicated to Islam. We reached out to Casa Arabe (an autonomous institution in the Foreign Ministry responsible for promoting greater understanding of Arabs and Muslims in the world). The Director offered to post the information to Casa Arabe's website; we also sent information to Muslim cultural centers in Madrid, Barcelona, and Cordoba, and distributed information via our Information Resource Centers in Madrid and Barcelona to several hundred subscribers to our Muslim information mailing list.

LOOKING AHEAD: PLANS TO SUPPORT THE SUMMIT

¶ 16. ROUNDTABLES (Reftel tasking para 10): The Working Group has tentatively identified a date of December 17 for a roundtable in Madrid hosted by the Chief of Mission; Barcelona will propose a date for a similar event hosted by the Consul General in Barcelona. These events will include not only the Mission's potential nominees for the Summit, but also influential representatives from Muslim communities, social and cultural organizations who can provide context for a discussion

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of entrepreneurship and the economic issues that affect the communities they represent.

¶ 17. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY & ECONOMIC PROMOTION ACTIVITIES (Reftel tasking para 11):

(a) As noted in paras 4 and 5, PAS Madrid and Barcelona have already undertaken efforts to broadly disseminate information about the Summit to key contacts and organizations in Muslim communities in Spain via direct contact and through the use of Internet and new media. The Summit is prominently listed on the Embassy home page. We plan to keep it on the home page up through the Summit.

(b) The IRCs in Madrid and Barcelona will continue to distribute information on the Summit to their existing and growing distribution lists of recipients. Madrid's nominees will be added to the lists, if not already on them. The IRCs will also send pertinent information to Muslim cultural centers and organizations working with Muslim communities to keep them engaged.

(c) Officers throughout the Mission will strengthen contact with Spain's eventual nominees (both Mission-nominated and self-nominated) to ensure their effective participation. We hope that the Summit team will inform and provide the Embassy with contact information of any Spain nominees who self-nominate and all Spain candidates (both Spanish citizens and non-citizen residents in Spain) who are selected to participate so that the Embassy may reach out to them.

(d) When more details about the Summit are available, Embassy Officers will engage local media, think tanks, and contacts in Muslim communities on the Summit goals and objectives.

(e) We hope that Washington will produce appropriate articles and op-eds for Post to place in local media.

(f) ECON and USCS will emphasize the themes of the Summit through local chambers of commerce, businesses, business organizations, and Spanish government ministries and institutions that promote entrepreneurship. Promotion efforts may also include speaking engagements at Spanish university business schools. ECON and USCS will inform PA of potential programs and activities for which entrepreneurs and stakeholders may be eligible. These programs will be publicized on the Embassy web site. (reftel tasking para 11)

Chacon